

# RESIDENT NEWSLETTER



Housing People

Creating places that people love to come home to  
February 2024 Issue

Great Places, Great Service, Great Business and Great People



Exeter Quay photographed by Emily Roberts, Senior Customer Services Advisor

## *Inside this Issue*



EASTER  
COLOURING



SAFETY TESTING  
- LET US IN



PARKING ON CURBS



CHINESE NEW  
YEAR

## CONTACT US



**Postal**  
Cornerstone House  
Western Way  
Exeter  
EX1 1AL

Please note our office is  
appointment only



**Customer Service**  
01392 273462  
(Option 3)

[mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)



**Repairs**  
01392 273462  
(Option 1)

[repairs@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:repairs@cornerstonehousing.net)

We are open Monday to Friday  
from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

### What you can do on our website

- Report an ASB Incident
- Report a repair
- View your tenant handbook
- Apply for a mutual exchange
- Make a complaint, give feedback or a compliment

### Out of hours

If you have an emergency with your home outside of our normal opening hours, you can call **01392 273462** (option 1) and your call will be diverted to our out-of-hours team.

## WELCOME FROM JANET

Hello everyone.

Once again, a bumper edition of contents for this month's newsletter.



Easter egg competition, gardening competition, wildlife in your community spring photo competition, yes you have read this correctly, not one but THREE competitions!

### EVENTS:

- Chinese New Year on 10th - 24th February
- Ramadan
- International Women's Day

Other Items to include apprenticeships schemes, anti-social behaviour review, and parking on curbs (this is a no no).

And all the time the Residents Engagement Panel are working on Pets Policy and many more items.

If any resident would like to help us with this policy, or with our review of Anti-social behaviour, please come forward, we would love to hear from you.

*Janet Gale*

Janet Gale,

Chair, Residents Engagement Panel.

# OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE IS MOVING ON

Our Chief Executive, Tom Woodman, is moving on to a new role with another housing association.

After a rigorous process involving resident input, our board has appointed a new Chief Executive who will start work in April after a careful handover from Tom.

Tom says “I’m sorry to be leaving Cornerstone after a busy four years working closely with residents, our staff team and our board. I’m really pleased that Cornerstone has appointed a great new chief executive, and we’ll be able to tell you lots more about them in our March newsletter. What won’t be changing is our ethos of being a people organisation providing high-quality services. That ethos will still be embedded in everything we do”.



## VICTORIA HEIGHTS ALPHINGTON

Cornerstone is happy to announce we have just purchased 6 new build flats in the Victoria Heights area of Alphington. These 3 x 1 bedroom flats (including a study) and 3 x 2 bedroom flats will be available to let in Spring 2024 and will be advertised on Devon home choice in the coming weeks.



# Easter Colouring!



Easter is nearly here, and we are launching our 2024 Easter colouring competition!

**Every entry received from a Cornerstone resident will receive an Easter egg!**

**How to enter:** Submit an Easter picture – this can be drawn from scratch, or you can colour in one of our colouring sheets from our website.

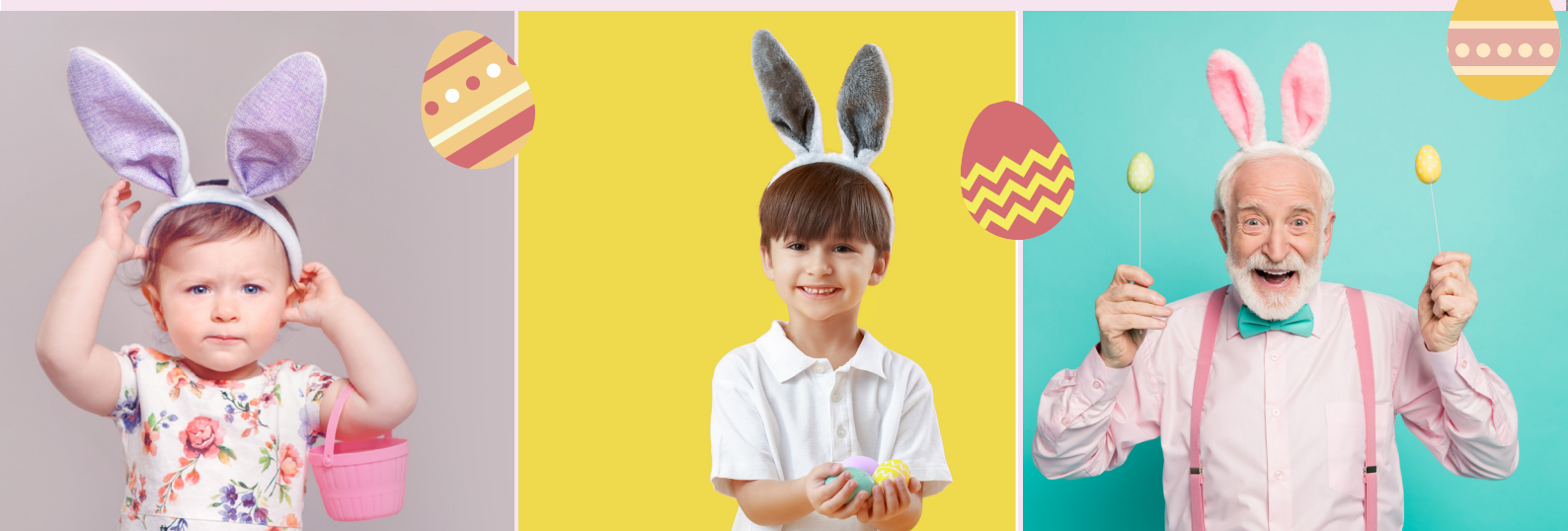
Not got a printer at home? Don't worry you have two other options:

1. Email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) with your name and address and how many colouring sheets you would like, and we will post some to you the next day (we will even include a return envelope!)
2. Colour it digitally! If you have a computer, tablet or phone there are many apps available for you to draw or colour an Easter picture.



**Closing date 22nd March 2024**

Full terms and conditions and how to submit your entry can be found on our website:  
[www.cornerstonehousing.net/easter-colouring-competition](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/easter-colouring-competition)



# FIRE DOOR SURVEYS IN BLOCKS OF FLATS

Under Fire Safety Regulations, we are required to carry out an inspection of all fire doors in blocks of flats which includes communal entrance doors and property entrance doors. Communal fire doors within the block need to be inspected every three months, and property entrance doors annually.

It is very important that all fire doors are kept closed, and fire doors must not be wedged open. Self-closing devices must not be tampered with and any faults or damage to a fire door must be reported immediately.

## **Why is this important?**

If used correctly, fire doors keep a fire contained in the area where it starts for longer, they slow the spread of fire through a building. They can protect people and their homes for longer by giving more time for the fire and rescue services time to attend, and by providing safe exit routes out of the building.

Please note all our blocks of flats have a stay put policy which means that due to the fire door to your flat it is safer for you to remain in your home until the fire service arrives, unless the fire is in your home, in which case you should leave.

## **What we are doing**

Cornerstone has instructed a fire door inspector called Alliance who will be contacting all residents within flats, to arrange an appointment to carry out a fire door inspection. They will need access to your flat, the hallway outside and will need to view your door from the inside.

Thank you for your cooperation in arranging this appointment as it is vital that we keep all fire doors well maintained and in full working order.

If you ever spot a problem with your fire door, please let us know.

# ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) REVIEW 2024

Cornerstone are working with our Resident Engagement Panel to look at how we support our residents with ASB in their neighbourhood.

Our recent tenant satisfaction surveys have shown that 59% of residents are satisfied with our approach to handling ASB.

We would really like to understand how we can perform better in supporting residents.

**So, here's what we are going to do to fully understand how we can improve;**

- **Review the information we provide to residents, like on our website, so that people know what ASB is, how to report it and what can be done about**
- **We will advise residents on the different ways ASB can be reported to us.**
- **Update you on the outcome of our review and any recommendations from the panel**
- **Provide regular ASB updates in this newsletter**
- **Ask residents directly about their experiences of ASB, how they want to communicate with us about ASB and how we can perform better in supporting you. You can feedback to us using this link; <http://tinyurl.com/ch-asb-experience>**

We would love to hear from you if you would like to get involved with the Resident Engagement Panel, please call 01392 473462 or email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) if you would like to find out more.

Our Resident Engagement Panel would like to talk to their fellow residents about ASB and will be making phone calls to residents (who have provided feedback about ASB previously) on Thursday 22nd February 2024 between 10:00 and 12 noon. If you would like to schedule a call with our REP please call **01392 273462** or email us at [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)

# Cornerstone Gardening Competition 2024

Calling all green fingered residents!

We are launching our 2024 gardening competition.

Whether you have a full lawn with flowerbeds or a selection of hanging basket and pots at your home - everyone can enter!

- Best overall garden – £100
- Most creative use of space! - £25
- Best young gardener - £25
- Tallest sunflower - £25

To enter, please email 3 photos of your garden to [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net), include your name, address.

Closing date for entries is August 3rd. Our resident engagement panel will judge all the entries the first week of August.

We can post sunflower seeds to anyone wishing to take part, contact [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) before the end of March.

# HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR RESIDENTS!

Chinese New Year officially begins on February 10th, 2024, it typically lasts around 15 days, it begins with the new moon and ends on the following full moon. The arrival of the full moon is traditionally marked with a Festival of Lanterns.

## 2024 is the Year of the Dragon.

The dragon is the fifth animal in the Chinese zodiac. In the Chinese culture, the dragon represents good luck, strength, and health. The dragon is unique because it is the only mythical creature of all the animals in the Chinese zodiac and babies are born in the year of the dragon more than any other animal.



HAPPY  
CHINESE  
NEW YEAR  
2024  
YEAR OF THE DRAGON

### Did you know...

Exeter university is hosting a Luna new year celebration which is free to attend on February 13th ending with a firework celebration at the end of the day.

[www.exeter.ac.uk/students/international/livingintheuk/getinvolved/lunarnew](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/international/livingintheuk/getinvolved/lunarnew)



## *The great race – story*

Many years ago, there was a Chinese ruler known as the Jade Emperor who decided that, for his birthday, he wanted to make it easier for himself and the people of China to keep track of time. But he wasn't sure how. So, he decided to hold a swimming race for all of the animals in the Kingdom. However, only twelve animals decided to take part in the race. The Jade Emperor was so grateful to the twelve animals that he decided to reward them all by naming a year after each of them. The race determined the order each animal would be placed. This was a great honour and each animal wanted to be the first to cross the river and win the race.

Surprisingly, it was the rat- the smallest creature to take part in the race- that won the dangerous swim across the huge river! The rat was meant to attend the swimming race with his friend, the cat. But the cat was a sleepy animal who loved to nap. Instead of waking his friend up, the cunning rat left the cat behind and made his way to the race alone. This is why there is no year named after the cat and also why cats have hated rats ever since!

When the rat reached the river and the race was just about to start, he cleverly asked the ox if he could ride on his back to cross the river safely. The ox was a strong giant who kindly said yes to the rat. Instead of letting the ox win and say thank-you at the other side, the rat leaped from the ox's back and over his head so that he crossed the finish line first and won the race! This is why the first year of the Chinese calendar is the 'Year of the Rat' and the second year is the 'Year of the Ox'.

One by one, the remaining animals crossed the river to the finish line and received their prize from the Jade Emperor. After the rat and the ox, the first animal to cross the finish line was the tiger followed by the rabbit, dragon, horse, snake, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and finally the pig. The pig was a slow and lazy animal who got hungry during the race and stopped to eat some grass at the side of the river. After eating, the pig got sleepy and dozed off, making him the last animal to safely cross the river and over the finish line. This is why the final year of the Chinese calendar is known as 'The Year of the pig'.

Many people think the dragon should have won the race instead of coming in fifth place. The dragon, after all, could fly and was probably the strongest creature in the race. The dragon was a noble creature though and instead of focusing on crossing the river, he was distracted by the screams of villagers nearby who were fighting a huge fire in their village. The brave dragon quickly rushed to the village to stop the fire by using his icy breath. Once the village was safe, the dragon returned to the race to see the rabbit struggling to swim against the strong current in the river. Once again, the dragon used his powerful breath to blow the rabbit safely across the river and over the finish line and this is how the meek and gentle rabbit beat the strong and courageous dragon.

## KEEPING YOU SAFE — GAS SAFETY AUDITS BY MORGAN LAMBERT

Morgan Lambert is a safety auditing company that we have asked to check the standard of our workmanship on our gas and electrical work over the coming year. It is important for us to allow external professionals to check our work every so often, so we know that we are providing the best possible standard of service to you.

You may receive a letter or text message from Morgan Lambert at some point in the coming months asking you for an appointment to check your home gas or electrical supply. If you can, please arrange an appointment with Morgan Lambert, thank you. If you have any questions or concerns about Morgan Lambert and the work they are doing for us, please do not hesitate to contact the Building and Customer Safety Team at [compliance@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:compliance@cornerstonehousing.net) or your housing officer for more information.



**morgan lambert.**



## SAFETY TESTING — LET US IN FIRST TIME FOR THE CHANCE TO WIN A GIFT VOUCHER

We care about value for money here at Cornerstone, so if we visit for an arranged appointment and you're not in, it means the staff time and travel costs for that visit are wasted.

So, if you let us in first time for a gas or electrical safety check, you will be entered into a prize draw with the chance of winning a £25 voucher. The draw will take place every 3 months, with the first one at the end of March.

Thank you and good luck!

# HOW WE DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS

## What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as any dissatisfaction expressed by you, whether justified or not. This could be regarding our services, action or a lack of action by Cornerstone Housing, our staff, or anyone acting on our behalf.



If you contact us to complain about a problem with your home, like your boiler isn't working or you have mould in your home, we will deal with this as a 'service request'. We will talk to you about how we can help to resolve the issue, this may include booking an appointment to investigate the problem or giving you advice.

If you contact us to complain about a problem with your neighbour, anti-social behaviour, a parking, pet or other neighbourhood issue, we will deal with as a 'service request'. We will explain what we can do to help, what we may need you to do, the process we will follow and we will give advice.

If you are dissatisfied with how we have responded or dealt with that problem or service request, we will then deal with it under our complaints process.

## How to make a complaint

You can ask to make a complaint using any form of communication, including by phone, email, SMS, in person, and in a letter. We also have a form on our website Make a complaint, give feedback or a compliment – Cornerstone Housing. You can ask for a representative to make a complaint on your behalf if this is easier for you.

Our staff should recognise if the issue you are raising is a complaint, but they may clarify with you if you would like us to investigate your concerns as a formal complaint.

## We have a two stage complaint process

Stage one – your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days, investigated by a senior member of staff and you will normally receive a response within 10 working days of us acknowledging it.

Stage two – if you remain dissatisfied after stage one you can ask for a review or an escalation of your complaint. This will be acknowledged within 5 working days, investigated by a different senior member of staff and you will normally receive a response within 20 working days of us acknowledging it.

## Taking your complaint further or getting advice

The Housing Ombudsman Service is available for advice throughout the complaints process and you can ask them to review your complaint if you remain dissatisfied after you have been through our two stage process. You can contact them on their website

**[www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us/](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us/)** by phone **0300 111 3000**, email **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk** or in writing: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ.

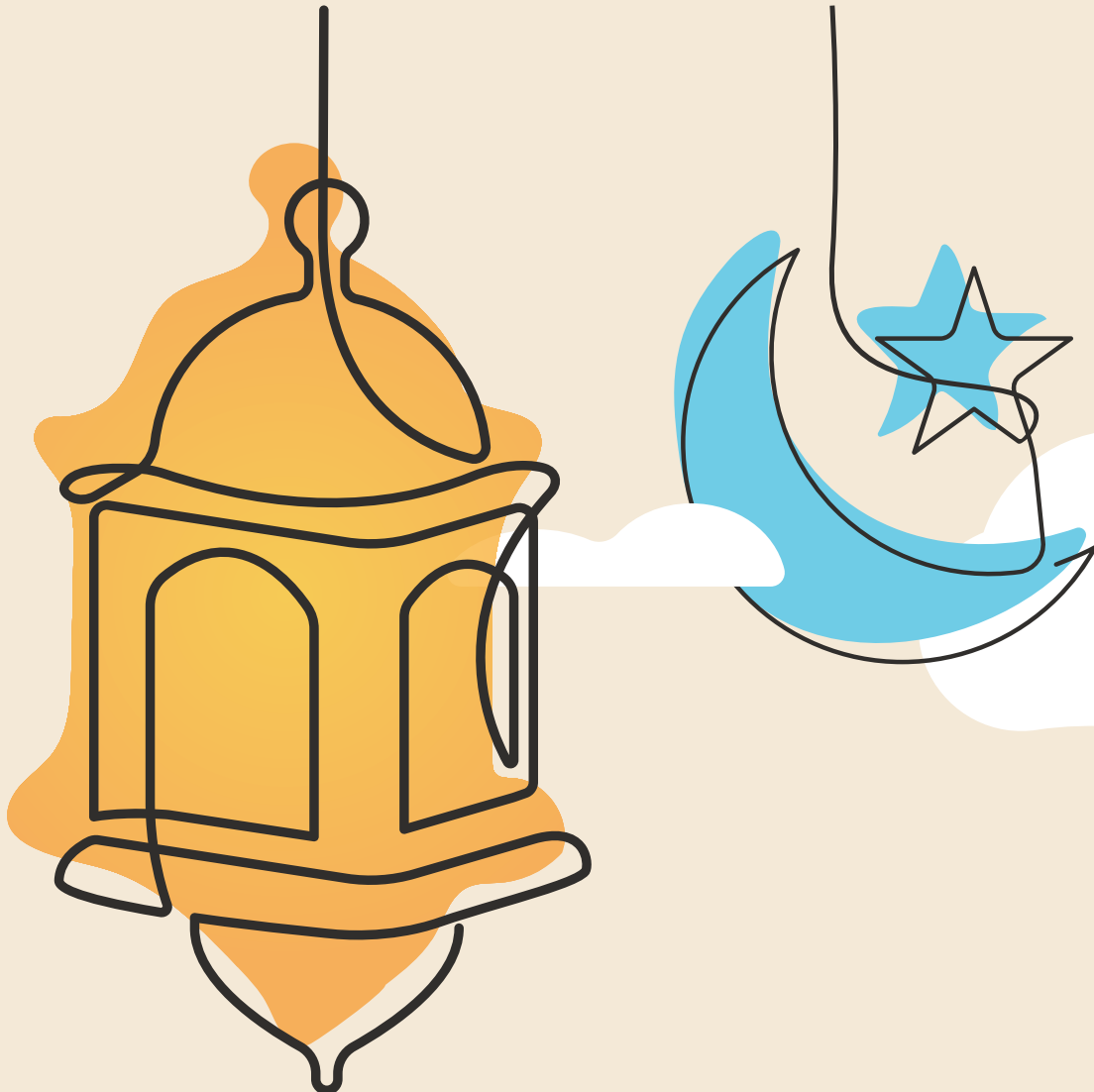
# RAMADAN

From Sunday 10th March till Tuesday 9th April our Muslim residents will be observing Ramadan.

Ramadan remembers the month the Qur'an (the Muslim holy book) was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. The actual night that the Qur'an was revealed is a night known as Lailut ul-Qadr ('The Night of Power'). Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The exact dates of Ramadan change every year. This is because Islam uses a calendar based on the cycles of the Moon.

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims won't eat or drink during the hours of daylight from dawn till sunset. This is called fasting. Fasting allows Muslims to devote themselves to their faith. It is thought to teach self-discipline and reminds them of the suffering of the poor. During Ramadan, it is common to have one meal (known as the suhoor), just before dawn and another (known as the iftar), directly after sunset.

Many Muslims will attempt to read the whole of the Qur'an at least once during Ramadan. They will also attend special services in Mosques during which the Qur'an is read.



## Ramadan is part of the 5 pillars of Islam

The Five Pillars of Islam are the five obligations that every Muslim must satisfy in order to live a good and responsible life according to Islam.

The Five Pillars consist of:

- Shahadah: sincerely reciting the Muslim profession of faith
- Salat: performing ritual prayers in the proper way five times each day
- Zakat: paying an alms (or charity) tax to benefit the poor and the needy
- Sawm: fasting during the month of Ramadan
- Hajj: pilgrimage to Mecca

## Why are they important?

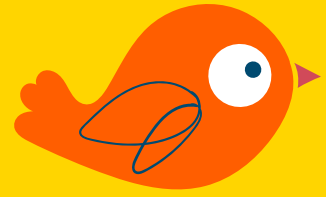
Carrying out these obligations provides the framework of a Muslim's life and weaves their everyday activities and their beliefs into a single cloth of religious devotion.

No matter how sincerely a person may believe, Islam regards it as pointless to live life without putting that faith into action and practice.

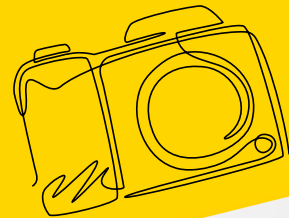
Carrying out the Five Pillars demonstrates that the Muslim is putting their faith first, and not just trying to fit it in around their secular lives.



# WILDLIFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY, SPRING PHOTO COMPETITION

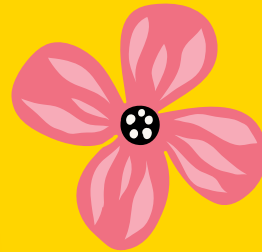
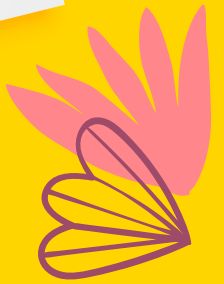


Your picture here!



Are you a keen photographer? Have you taken any pictures of the area you live in? We would love to see your photos and feature them within our upcoming newsletters and on our website.

It could be pictures of your garden full of ice on a sunny winter's morning. Your community gathering together for an event. The blossom appearing on the trees. We are excited to see what our residents send us and to show us what a great home and area you live in.



**Anyone, any age can enter!**

The winner will receive a framed version of their photograph, and the photo will be featured in our newsletter and on our website. email your pictures to [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) by 30th April 2024



# TURNTABLE IS BACK OPEN!

Do you have furniture in good, clean condition that you no longer need?



Turntable can collect!

Desperately needed:

Beds

Mattresses

Wardrobes

Chest of Drawers

Turntable are unable to accept upholstered items unless they have fire labels stating they comply with the 1988 (or later) furniture regulations.

To arrange collection:

call 01392 202032 or email [office@turntable.org.uk](mailto:office@turntable.org.uk)



## **PARKING ON CURBS NOT ALLOWING PEOPLE TO PASS**

We would like to remind all our residents about parking your cars in a considerate way for other people. We have received various complaints saying people are mounting the curb and parking on the foot path which doesn't allow enough room for pedestrians, pram, wheelchairs, and the visually impaired to pass.

# SHROVE TUESDAY

Shrove Tuesday is a celebration that's observed the day before Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday marks the first day of the Christian observance of Lent, a 40-day period of abstinence that precedes Easter.

As such, Ash Wednesday is the last day on which those who observe Lent can enjoy certain items before giving them up for the period of lent. Throughout the centuries it's become tradition for people to eat pancakes to mark the beginning of Lent to use up ingredients that they wouldn't be allowed to eat during the 40-day period, which is how Pancake Day obtained its name. Christians would give up rich, tasty foods such as butter, eggs, sugar and fat and pancake make and easy and yummy way to use the items up.

In some countries, including France, Germany and the United States, the day before the start of Lent is recognised with a celebration called Mardi Gras.

Translated as meaning "Fat Tuesday" in French, the festivities often involve Carnival activities such as extravagant parades.

**The four ingredients in pancakes are significant to Easter celebrations**

**Eggs ~ Creation   Flour ~ The staff of life  
Salt ~ Wholesomeness   Milk ~ Purity**

## Recipe

- 100g plain flour
- 2 large eggs or egg replacement
- 300ml milk or milk substitute
- 1 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil, plus a little extra for frying

## Method

STEP 1 Put 100g plain flour, 2 large eggs, 300ml milk, 1 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil and a pinch of salt into a bowl or large jug, then whisk to a smooth batter.

STEP 2 Set aside for 30 mins to rest if you have time or start cooking straight away.

STEP 3 Set a medium frying pan or crêpe pan over a medium heat and carefully wipe it with some oiled kitchen paper.

STEP 4 When hot, cook your pancakes for 1 min on each side until golden,

STEP 5 Serve with lemon wedges and caster sugar, or your favourite filling.

